

ORANGE COUNTY
MIOCR Program (\$1,500,000 grant)

This project involves implementation of a prompt and thorough in-jail assessment, creation of Mental Health Court that would serve misdemeanor offenders, and establishment of a treatment and support structure to promote successful community reintegration.

The first component of this project is an expedited, in-depth assessment of incarcerated offenders by a psychiatrist and clinical social worker; the assessment includes a diagnostic evaluation and a review of outpatient program options. The second component is creation of a Mental Health Court for mentally ill misdemeanor offenders. Individuals assessed by the court team (judge, district attorney, public defender, deputy probation officer and clinical social worker) as eligible and suitable for the program are released on formal probation, with at least the first year being supervised (with a caseload of 40 for the probation officer). Individuals who volunteer to participate in the program must agree to take medication as prescribed, attend treatment and counseling sessions, maintain sobriety for at least six months (with random and frequent testing as the court deems necessary), and attend court review hearings for a period of at least one year.

In addition to providing an individualized case plan with intensive case management, mental health services, medication protocols, and substance abuse treatment as needed, the project links participants to housing (20 transitional beds and one residential substance abuse bed), disability benefits, transportation, job and/or education development, and peer support.

Project Director: Kevin Smith, Division Manager, Adult Mental Health Services
(714) 834-5904; ksmith@ochca.com